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DE RUEHZP #0943 3591629
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FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 2755
INFO RUEHSJ/AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE 1955
RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA 2729
RHMFIASS/COMDT COGARD WASHINGTON DC
RHMFIASS/DIRJIATF SOUTH
RHMFIASS/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RHMFIASS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L PANAMA 000943

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/23/2018
TAGS: PGOV PREL MARR MASS MOPS SNAR PBTS PM
SUBJECT: PANAMA: "NOT READY FOR GRAY HULLS" UNDER
SALAS-BECKER

REF: PANAMA 933

Classified By: POLCOUNS BRIAN R. NARANJO. REASONS: 1.4 (B) AND (D)

(C) "Panama is not ready to consider deployment of U.S. gray hulled ships in Panamanian waters under (the) Salas-Becker (Maritime Cooperation Agreement)," First VP and FM Samuel Lewis informed Ambassador on December 22. Ambassador had congratulated Lewis on the success of U.S.-Panama consultations to establish standard operating procedures to implement Salas-Becker (reftel). Lewis was shocked that his MFA-led GOP interagency team expressed willingness to consider deployment of U.S. Navy gray hull ships in Panamanian waters under Salas-Becker, regardless of whether or not U.S. Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachments (LEDETs) were embarked aboard. "We are not politically ready to consider gray hulls," Lewis stated, noting that his negotiating team had gone beyond its instructions.

STEPHENSON